

Decision 03-10-007 October 2, 2003

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Application of the Sacramento Regional Transit District for an Order authorizing the District to construct, modify, maintain and operate a light rail passenger system and Union Pacific Railroad tracks across 17<sup>th</sup> Street, 18<sup>th</sup> Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Street, S Street, T Street, V Street, W Street, X Street, Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 21<sup>st</sup> Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Fruitridge Road, 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Florin Road in the City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, State of California.

Application 99-08-017  
(Filed August 11, 1999,  
amended November 5, 1999;  
Petition For Modification  
filed July 30, 2003)

**ORDER MODIFYING DECISION 00-03-011**

By Decision (D.) 00-03-011, dated March 2, 2000, in Application (A.) 99-08-017, the Sacramento Regional Transit District (District) was authorized to construct one at grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) and modify 14 at-grade crossings, at the locations and substantially as shown on the plans attached to A.99-08-017, and delineated in Appendix B of D.00-03-011.

On July 30, 2003, the District filed a Petition for Modification of D.00-03-011, requesting to modify the Decision by:

- Ordering the plan for 19<sup>th</sup> Street approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-3 showing the new configuration of the crossing as approximately parallel to the tracks, and relocation of one California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.

- Ordering the plan for 21<sup>st</sup> Street approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-11 showing the new configuration of the crossing, including the closure of one driveway, the relocation of one Commission Standard No. 9, automatic gate with flashing light signal, and installation of one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.
- Ordering the plan for 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-12 showing the new configuration of the crossing moving the western warning device parallel with the tracks.
- Ordering the plan for Fruitridge Road approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-13 showing the addition of one Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.
- Ordering the revised Data Charts, which reflect the nearside grade crossing protection, replace the Data Charts from the original Application, and approve their use at the crossings as listed in the Data Charts.

The proposed changes were discussed with the Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section staff (RCES) in a series of meetings for evaluation of any impacts on safety. At 19<sup>th</sup> Street the District proposes to move the warning devices approximately parallel with the tracks instead of the approved configuration, which was perpendicular to the road. Safety is improved by moving the warning devices, because the warning devices would be further from the loading docks of an adjacent business, visibility to the warning devices would be improved, and the warning devices would provide increased pedestrian safety by being closer to the actual track. Also proposed was the

relocation of the Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal, on the southwest corner. In early 2003, a new development on the southwest side of the crossing began construction. As part of the development the City of Sacramento (City) abandoned R Street between 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets. The original placement of the warning device had been in relation to R Street. As R Street no longer exists there, the warning device can be moved to the standard configuration of 4 feet – 3 inches from the face of curb and 15 feet from the centerline of the nearest track.

At 21<sup>st</sup> Street the District proposes to close the driveway, relocate the Commission Standard No. 9, automatic gate with flashing light signals, and to install one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal, on the northeast 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue median. The District negotiated with the adjacent property owner and the City to allow these changes, improving the safety of the intersection. Although the driveway had been protected in the original application, the City and District agreed it would be safer to close it entirely. Alternate access to the business is provided from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. As a result of the alternate access configuration, the Commission Standard No. 9, automatic gate with flashing light signal, needed to be slightly relocated to better protect 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue turning movement. The additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal, on the northeast 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue median provides improved safety for pedestrians traveling southbound on the east side of 21<sup>st</sup> Street.

At 26<sup>th</sup> Street the District proposes to move the western gate parallel with the tracks instead of perpendicular to the road. In the current configuration the light rail operators can not visually verify that the gate is in the down position due to the location of soundwalls along the right-of-way. These sound walls are required as part of the noise mitigation measures. By relocating the gate parallel

with the tracks, the light rail operators will be able to visually verify that the gate is in the down position as they approach the crossing.

At Fruitridge Road, the District proposes to install one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal, on the southeast corner. The District predicts an increase in pedestrian traffic with the nearby light rail station. The additional warning device would increase safety for pedestrians traveling along the south side of Fruitridge Road.

The District also requests to replace the original data charts in order to include the nearside grade crossing information. The nearside grade crossing circuitry modifications delay activation of crossing signals, including dropping of the gates, whenever a light rail vehicle stops at a station before crossing a street (near-side station). The delay in activation of the crossing signals for the light rail vehicles when stopping at near-side stations to alight and board passengers should reduce the time the crossings are closed to vehicles and pedestrians. A final report previously submitted by the District for two trial locations showed that there is improved traffic flow with less delay and congestion for those streets where the crossings are located.

By Commission Resolution SX-9, dated November 23, 1993, the Commission approved the permanent use of the nearside grade crossing circuitry at the two trial locations, and at 14 other locations. As part of the approval, the Commission placed several requirements on the District at those locations. Consistent with the previous Resolution, the Commission requires the following requirements shall apply to the crossings equipped with the nearside grade crossing circuitry as detailed on the revised data sheets:

1. The District's train operating rules shall require a mandatory stop at all station platforms at all times.

2. The District shall install a “station leaving” signal which will incorporate the near-side logic at all nearside station platforms. The leaving signal shall have “stop” and “proceed” aspects and will be installed between the station and the associated crossing and be visible to the train operator for a minimum distance equal to the length of the station platform. In addition to the normal Automatic Block System logic checking based upon track ahead conditions, the leaving signal will not upgrade to a “proceed” aspect until after the light rail vehicle has stopped at the nearside station, the crossing warning sequence at the crossing has been initiated, and sufficient warning time to motorists has been assured at the crossing as required by Commission General Order 75-C.
3. The District will report any failures of the nearside logic and/or indication that result in a false “proceed” aspect or other similar unsafe condition to the Commission’s Rail Transit Safety Section within five working days after the failure occurred.
4. At each nearside crossing, the District will monitor the logic operations of the nearside grade crossing using a solid-state event recorder.
5. The District shall prepare a preventative maintenance program for the nearside grade crossing equipment. The program will include scheduled periodic checks of the operational data recorded at each nearside crossing to verify that the train operators continue to correctly follow the prescribed operating rules and procedures for these crossings and that the equipment continues to operate correctly in a safe manner.

Notice of the Petition for Modification was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on August 1, 2003. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

The crossings approved in D.00-03-011 are scheduled to open for revenue service in the fall of 2003. As Commission staff is in agreement to the proposed modifications, the matter is uncontested and operations will soon begin, this decision should be effective immediately.

This is an uncontested matter in which the decision grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 311(g)(2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is being waived.

### **Assignment of Proceeding**

Richard Clark is the assigned Examiner in this proceeding.

### **Findings of Fact**

1. The District requests authority to modify D.00-03-011 in A.99-08-017 by:
  - Ordering the plan for 19<sup>th</sup> Street approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-3 showing the new configuration of the crossing as approximately parallel to the tracks, and relocation of one Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.
  - Ordering the plan for 21<sup>st</sup> Street approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-11 showing the new configuration of the crossing, including the closure of one driveway, the relocation of one Commission Standard No. 9, automatic gate with flashing light signal, and installation of one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.

- Ordering the plan for 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-12 showing the new configuration of the crossing moving the western warning device parallel with the tracks.
- Ordering the plan for Fruitridge Road approved in Ordering Paragraph 3 be replaced with the revised drawing C-13 showing the addition of one Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.
- Ordering the revised Data Charts, which reflect the nearside grade crossing protection, replace the Data Charts from the original Application, and approve their use at the crossings as listed in the Data Charts.

2. RCES is in agreement with the District's proposal.

### **Conclusion of Law**

The Petition for Modification of D.00-03-011 in A.99-08-017 should be granted as set forth in the following order.

**IT IS ORDERED** that:

1. Decision (D.) 00-03-011 Ordering Paragraph 3 be modified that:
  - A. The revised drawing plan C-3 replace the original plan C-3 for 19<sup>th</sup> Street showing the configuration of the at grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) warning devices be approximately parallel to the tracks, and relocate the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) Standard No. 8, flashing light signal, on the southwest corner.
  - B. The revised drawing plan C-11 replace the original plan C-11 for 21<sup>st</sup> Street showing the closure of the driveway, relocation of the Commission Standard No. 9, automatic gate with flashing light signal,

and installation of one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.

C. The revised drawing plan C-12 replace the original plan C-12 for 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue showing the relocation of the western warning device to be parallel with the tracks.

D. The revised drawing plan C-13 replace the original plan C-13 for Fruitridge Road showing the installation of one additional Commission Standard No. 8, flashing light signal.

2. The revised Data Charts replace the original Data Charts, reflecting the use of the nearside grade crossing circuitry.

3. Where the nearside grade crossing circuitry is used the Sacramento Regional Transit District (District) shall fulfill the following requirements:

A. The District's train operating rules shall require a mandatory stop at all station platforms at all times.

B. The District shall install a station leaving signal which will incorporate the near-side logic at all nearside station platforms. The leaving signal shall have "stop" and "proceed" aspects and will be installed between the station and the associated crossing and be visible to the train operator for a minimum distance equal to the length of the station platform. In addition to the normal Automatic Block System logic checking based upon track ahead conditions, the leaving signal will not upgrade to a "proceed" aspect until after the light rail vehicle has stopped at the nearside station, the crossing warning sequence at the crossing has been initiated, and sufficient warning time to motorists has been assured at the crossing as required by Commission General Order 75-C.



- C. The District shall report any failures of the nearside logic and/or indication that result in a false “proceed” aspect or other similar unsafe condition to the Commission’s Rail Transit Safety Section within five working days after the failure occurred.
- D. At each nearside crossing, the District shall monitor the logic operations of the nearside grade crossing using a solid state event recorder.
- E. The District shall prepare a preventative maintenance program for the nearside grade crossing equipment. The program shall include schedule periodic checks of the operational data recorded at each nearside crossing to verify that the train operators continue to correctly follow the prescribed operating rules and procedures for these crossings and that the equipment continues to operate correctly in a safe manner.

4. In all other respects, D.00-03-011, dated March 2, 2000, in Application (A.) 99-08-017 shall remain in full effect.

5. A.99-08-017 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated October 2, 2003, at San Francisco, California.

MICHAEL R. PEEVEY  
President  
CARL W. WOOD  
LORETTA M. LYNCH  
GEOFFREY F. BROWN  
Commissioners

Commissioner Susan P. Kennedy,  
being necessarily absent, did not  
participate.